

# Mailmobile® Customer Cases

AUG-80

# Mailmobile:

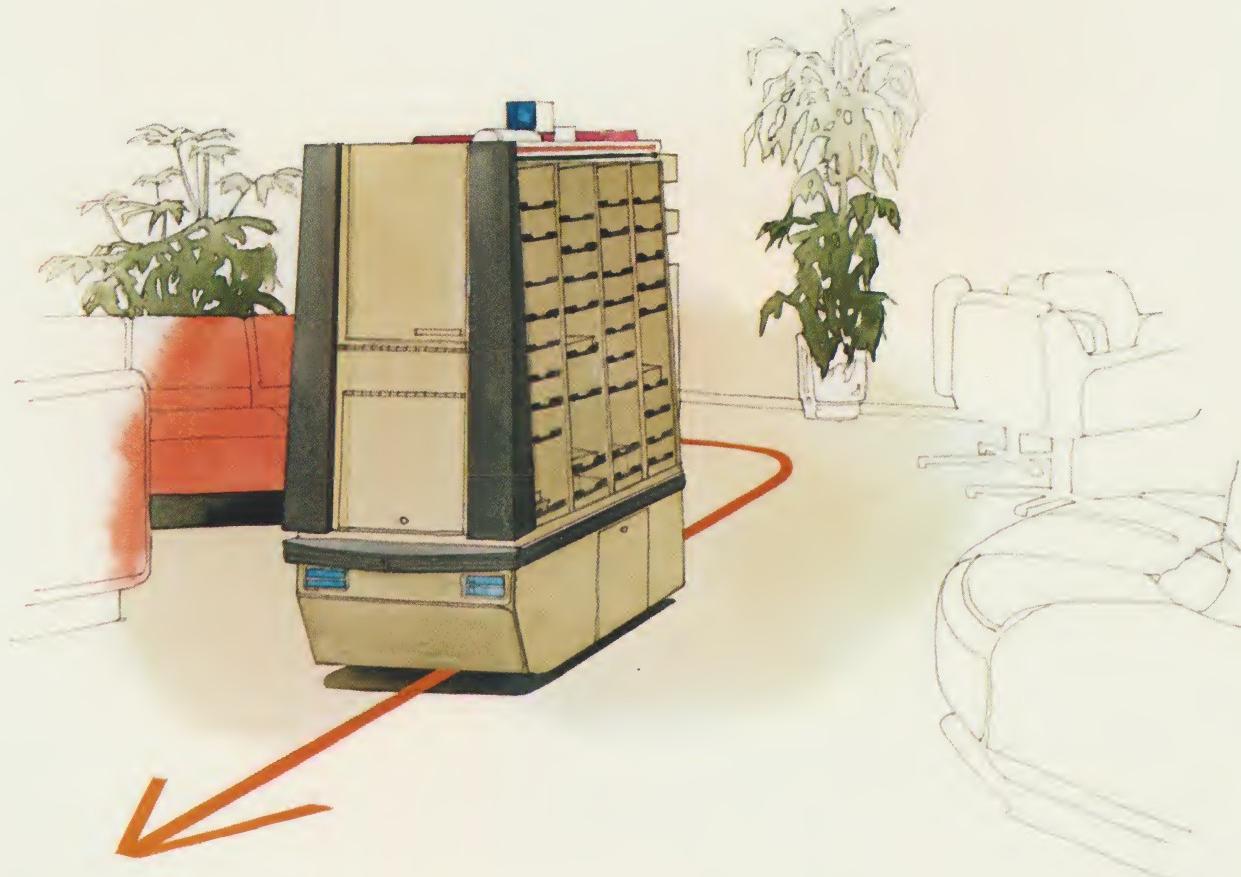
Solving the unsolvable problem of increasing internal mail delivery while cutting the cost.

Before Mailmobile, the handling of internal mail and paper was the weakest link in the otherwise super-productive chain of modern office equipment. Now, with Mailmobile, many companies are finally getting the maximum return on investment from people, computers, duplicating and word processing centers. And they're saving thousands of dollars each year in the process.

Mailmobile is an unmanned, self-propelled vehicle that follows an invisible chemical guidepath. It automatically stops at any designated points along its path to pick up and deliver mail, word and data processing materials, photocopies, office supplies and more.

Mailmobile makes its rounds with clocklike regularity, as often as every twenty minutes. The result? People receive and act on information now, not hours later. Your staff runs fewer errands that take them away from more productive work. Manpower needs go down. Delivery time goes down. Productivity goes up.

The proof? Look to the enclosed reports from just a few of the companies who now depend on Mailmobile to beat the high cost of internal mail and paper handling. Then calculate just how much this completely new concept and system could save your company. Call your local Lear Siegler representative to arrange for a free survey of your internal mail handling and delivery system.



*Spells  
it  
WTF!*

**AUTOMATED SYSTEMS DIVISION**

280 E. Riley Street Zeeland, Michigan 49464



**BELL & HOWELL**

AUTOMATED SYSTEMS DIVISION

280 E. Riley Street Zeeland, Michigan 49464



August 4, 1980

Mr. J. Nelson  
Systems Consultant  
P. O. Box 3  
Schooleys Mountain, NJ 07870

Dear Mr. Nelson:

In response to your recent inquiry concerning MAILMOBILE, our self-propelled delivery vehicle, I have enclosed our brochure which illustrates this exciting new system.

MAILMOBILE can benefit your business by providing a higher frequency of service at a lower overall cost than most conventional delivery methods. By keeping information and materials flowing regularly throughout the day, our system brings services within easy reach of everyone and allows people to concentrate on their jobs - instead of being interrupted with impromptu errand-running that disrupts work and interferes with productivity.

If you wish more information about MAILMOBILE and the way in which it can provide a new dimension to your office distribution services, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rosemary Haake".

Rosemary Haake  
Marketing Administrator

(616) 772-1000

# Nobody knows the ins & outs of mail handling like Bell & Howell does.

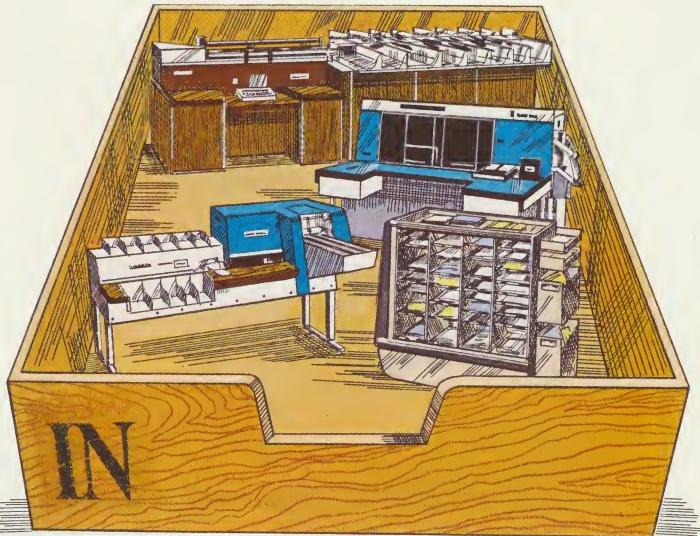
While mailroom and remittance processing operations may seem a minor part of your business, they can have a major effect on your cash flow. Make sure it's a positive effect, with the proven labor and cost-savers from Bell & Howell.

**Automated System's** Mailmobile™ is a self-propelled, unmanned automatically guided mail/document delivery vehicle. It follows an invisible guidepath with automatic stops for pick-up and drop-off—and converts your mailroom into a cost-efficient communication center, routing information and supplies throughout the office on a more frequent, more reliable and less costly basis. Saves your key secretaries from running time-consuming errands.

**Business Data Products** NXP-770 One-Step Remittance Processing System represents the perfect solution for handling large volumes of incoming payments. It's geared to improve your remittance control, speed of processing and cash flow.

**DocuMail** O.C.R./B.C.R. microprocessor sorting systems let you take full advantage of the U.S.P.S. discount on first-class and/or third-class mail. ENCORE envelope contents removal system is a remarkable labor-saver. It improves cash flow on incoming remittances.

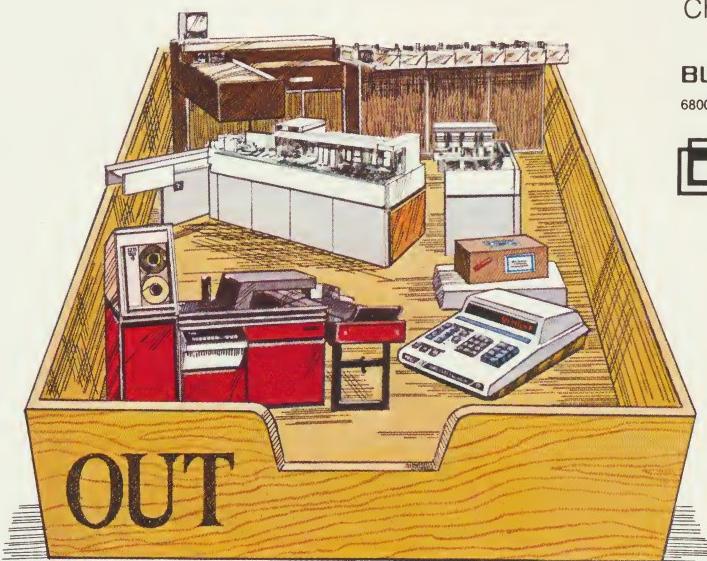
**Electronic Systems Products**, a complete line of precision electronic shipping and counting scales, accurately and automatically computes U.S.P.S. and U.P.S. rates. An option automatically sets the postage meter. Postage costs are listed for each department. The accuracy of this system can mean big reductions in your postal and shipping expenditures and a faster way to process your mail and shipments.



**Phillipsburg** high-speed envelope inserting equipment simplifies handling mailings such as invoices, direct mail, advertising, checks and financial reports. The equipment can be tailored to meet special needs. It also can be microprocessor controlled for matching, selecting and diverting. This equipment saves time and improves cash flow.

The computerized Ink-Jet Addressing System obsoletes old-fashioned metal plates and other systems.

All Bell & Howell equipment is designed to simplify the tedious process of mail handling. For the whole story on the Ins and Outs of mail handling, write or call Steve Heckmyer, Bell & Howell Company, Business Equipment Group, 6800 McCormick Road, Chicago, Illinois 60645. (312) 675-7600.



BUSINESS EQUIPMENT GROUP  
6800 McCormick Road Chicago, Illinois 60645

 **BELL & HOWELL**

**THE  
MAILHANDLERS**

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# TIGER LEASING

Tiger Leasing Group of Tiger International



**Tiger Leasing Group** was convinced Mailmobile would increase mail handling efficiency and overall office productivity even before they saw one in action. A talk with the first Mailmobile user, Sears, was given credit for this quick decision. A simple cost justification study proved the decision to be correct.

"We figured Mailmobile would enable us to reassign one mail page to other duties, reports Mrs. Judith Thomas, Director of Personnel. But, in addition to such an impressive return on investment it saves us even more in increased efficiency and productivity. But, of course, there is no true way of measuring these many subtle, yet very real benefits."

"One of these benefits is increased mail delivery efficiency," office services supervisor Michael Kraus explains. "The Mailmobile makes three trips per hour throughout all headquarter departments on a 20-minute cycle. Before, our page and shopping cart could manage only four stops per day. More frequent trips were impossible because the same page also handled mail room chores and shared duties with the telex machine operator who also spent much of his time hand delivering interoffice materials such as news releases and legal contracts. Now all of that is done by the Mailmobile."

"That 20-minute cycle really speeds up the flow of mail. And it's a rarity that something is so important it can't wait a few minutes to go on it. For example, we've found as a result accounts payable are paid faster simply because information is received quicker. There is no longer a bulk rush of outgoing mail at the end of the day, either. We've evened the work flow of the mail processing department."

"Telexes are, by their very nature, quite important pieces of paper. Without Mailmobile we were forced to have the telex operator distribute them so they wouldn't lose their sense of urgency. With Mailmobile, the telex operator no longer has to make rush deliveries. And that's not only more productivity on his part and more return on his salary, but a great saving of steps and time for everybody else."



"Another key ingredient to the Mailmobile's success has been its reliability. We've had no down-time since installation six months ago. Not really a surprise—we expected it based on other firms' experiences—but impressive nonetheless. This dependability and performance has also helped with employee acceptance. Perhaps the biggest indicator of this is the fact that shortly after installation we held a 'name the Mailmobile contest'. Of our 200 employees, 75 entered names. (CARNAC was the winner, CAR for the railroad cars we lease and NAC for our biggest division, North American Car.)

Altogether, Mailmobile has proven our quick decision was a very valid one. It's speeded our mail flow, increased our productivity in many ways and given us a very high return on our dollar investment. Perhaps, the only area of mail handling which can still be improved is in the area of incoming mail. Mailmobile provides little advantage there. But it's only because we receive mail from the post office just once a day."



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# CITIBANK

Citibank N.A.



"**Citibank** set three specific goals for Mailmobile as an alternative to its delivery system of human messengers. One, it had to cut the cost of the delivery system. Two, it had to increase the already high level of service experienced. And three, it had to increase productivity in areas directly related to the delivery service.

"When Lear Siegler released the Mailmobile, we felt it had the potential to meet these three objectives. We already knew it was superior to the horizontal conveyors, pneumatic tubes and other in-the-wall systems because it did not require drastic structural changes."

"After an initial feasibility study and a pilot installation we installed six units, one on each of six floors."

"Return on investment research involving all our employees convinced us the first six units would save us \$150,000 over a period of a year—a \$25,000 annual savings on each one. In fact, the vehicles paid for themselves in less than half a year, and we expect to realize comparable savings with the other 30 units we plan to install within a year's time."

"Where we used to employ 10 pages per floor we now use four people and one "Citipage", our name for the Mailmobile. The pages are responsible for sorting mail, making deliveries between floors and other non-routine work. However, we did not dismiss the remaining pages. Instead, we reassigned them to more productive work and through attrition, hired fewer new ones."

"The dollar savings are impressive, but they don't tell the whole story. We have also achieved our other objectives—increasing the level of service and improving productivity."

"The automated Citipages have improved service by making rounds every 20 minutes. Even when we had 10 pages per floor, deliveries were made every hour or two, and, when pages were in short supply, delays stretched up to five hours. And, the extra deliveries don't cost us any additional money."

"We now get a continuous, efficient flow of paper. Deliveries and pick-ups are made on schedule, and rush items which used to take pages away from their routes are now routinely carried by Mailmobile."

"Productivity has also increased, due in large part to the dependability of the automated vehicles. Before, when one or more pages were out due to vacations, sick leave or even lunch and coffee breaks, repercussions were felt throughout the floor. With the Citipages, however, we have had only three minor problems over a period of a year, and all of them were quickly corrected."

"There has also been a productivity increase at all staff levels. Since information is received in half an hour or less, as opposed to one, two or more hours, decisions can be made hours sooner. In addition, since the deadline for work that must be sent out is approximately 20 minutes, our people work hard to make the next run."

"We had anticipated some employee resentment of the automated pages, but in actual fact, they were grateful for the system since it saved them a lot of running around."

"Joanie Tresco summed up the attitude of our staff when she confessed that, 'At first I was against the idea of an automated page, but now I love it. The unit now makes my job easier because, with a 20 minute cycle I no longer have to run around the way I did when the pick-ups and deliveries were hours apart. On the other hand, the system also makes me work harder because it challenges me to get my work out before the next 20 minute pick-up.'"



"We have a few more ideas on other ways the Mailmobile can contribute to our operation. For example, we want to record announcements that can be played by the small tape machines carried on board each unit."

"For the present, though, we have met and surpassed our three objectives of saving money, increasing the level and frequency of service and achieving productivity gains in areas related to the delivery service. In short, we are quite pleased with the way the program has progressed."

\*All information contained in this report was taken from the Feb/March, 1977 issue of *Corporate Systems* magazine, volume 2, #1.



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# CANTEEN

Canteen Corporation



**Canteen Corporation** has its 72,000 square foot corporate headquarters in Chicago's Merchandise Mart. Ralph Shields, Canteen's Director of Operations Services describes it as, "An environment which both increases productivity and correctly projects our image as a progressive, efficient and high quality concern."

Mr. Shields goes on to describe Canteen's Mailmobile as "Our most recent and exciting addition to this image. Following a 1200-foot invisible guideway it routes mail from the mailroom to all departments and returns with outgoing and inter-office materials every thirty-five minutes. In addition, it handles copying and duplicating by taking requisitions to the copy and duplicating centers and bringing finished reproductions back to each department."

"We became interested in Mailmobile when I began to investigate new methods of increasing our mail handling efficiency. I first saw it at the Annual Mail Forum in Washington, D.C. and decided to check into it further. We conducted a time and motion study and discovered more than 25 people, including highly-paid secretaries and managers were making two to four trips per day to the mailroom. At five minutes per trip that's more than eight hours of lost salaried time per day. That clinched it for us. We rejected a proposal to conduct a costly, full-blown feasibility and return on investment study and went ahead with a test installation of Mailmobile as the best indicator of its worth."

"Mailmobile has substantially helped improve our total information flow. Running all day, every day, it makes 35 stops along its route on every trip. This high level and frequency of service has contributed to higher productivity levels throughout our office. Fewer errands are run and yet incoming, outgoing and inter-office mail is received faster so it can be acted upon sooner."



"A good example of this increased productivity can be seen in our handling of copy work. Our people used to take their own work to the center, often standing in line for a considerable time. Many times they would 'anticipate' the line and put off work. As with many large companies, the relatively simple step of delivering orders was hurting the productivity and the rate of return on investment we expected from our copy center. But now, since Mailmobile handles all pick ups and deliveries of orders and finished work, we've evened our work flow and saved a lot of steps in the process."

Mr. Shields is equally pleased with employee acceptance. "It's been 100%. Our employees really appreciate the fact that we've installed an office innovation which makes their jobs easier."

He goes on to add, "This acceptance can be attributed in part to the reliability of the system. Since installation in late 1976, we've experienced no downtime. Our employees know they can depend on the system so they use it, accept it and appreciate it."

"Although we have not yet had occasion to make any major changes in our Mailmobile system, we realize what a benefit its flexibility can hold for the future. As our requirements for space expand and change we know the Mailmobile can quickly, easily and inexpensively adapt. The few changes in the location of pick-up and delivery stops we've made to date have been ordered and implemented immediately without exception."

"In short," concludes Mr. Shields, "Mailmobile fits right into the working environment we've created: an environment that breeds productivity and projects our image as that progressive, efficient and high quality concern."



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# GULF OIL U.S.A.

Gulf Oil Corporation



**Gulf Oil's** new Westbelt Center houses 1800 workers on four levels totaling 470,000 square feet of net usable office space. It's overall design accomplishes the dual task of creating a very pleasant working environment and of promoting maximum productivity and efficiency. The new structure has been occupied since June of 1977.

Mr. E. H. Carothers, Director of the general services department notes the addition of eight Mailmobiles as one exceptional feature of this already-exceptional complex. "With more than 3½ acres per floor it would have taken three or four pages per floor to deliver the mail, in addition to our mail clerk on each floor. Based on that, our payout study, a computerized financial analysis, showed a return on investment within 2½ years and yearly savings of \$40,000 after that."

"Now with all Mailmobiles making their runs each half hour, one person per floor can easily handle all mail sorting and distribution, compared to more than four without them. But that doesn't tell the complete savings story, either. Because our mail pages just couldn't keep up with the Mailmobiles; it would take them twice as long to make a run. So in order to compare the efficiency of our Mailmobiles meaningfully, we'd have to double the number of pages to eight per floor. As a result, our return on investment would look twice as good."

"Now our entire mail system is manned by just eleven people. And they handle in excess of 12,000 pieces of mail per day."

"Employee acceptance has been exceptionally good. No adverse reactions at all. Mailmobiles were, at first, a curiosity. But now they are accepted completely."

"All in all", concludes Mr. Carothers, "the new building seems designed specifically for Lear Siegler's magic carts. They move easily in and out of loading stations, negotiate the longest hauls and tightest turns with equal ease. And they are a perfect match for our mail center. But the opposite is actually true. The building was planned long before we ever heard of Mailmobile. And that's a real tribute to our planners' foresight and to the Mailmobile's flexibility."



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# INCO

International Nickel Company, Inc.



**International Nickel** has now had six months of Mailmobile at work. "And we can honestly say our results with Mailmobile have been phenomenal," enthuses Mr. Lester Werkle, Manager of Office Services.

"First, we've reduced our staff through attrition from which we expect to save \$30,000 per year including our investment, amortization, maintenance and operation of the machines. That's based on replacement of one page on each of five floors. But that doesn't take into account the fact that we've doubled our delivery service from once per hour to once every half hour. So, really our savings are much greater, perhaps, even double that \$30,000."

"Changing to the half-hour delivery schedule gives our employees much better service. The sixty minute cycle

was too long for many urgent pieces like telexes, tickets, and urgent contracts. Before Mailmobiles they had to be hand delivered. And with over 700 employees spread out on five floors over 190,000 square feet of space, that was very time-consuming. Since Mailmobile saves all those extra trips, the busier we get the more Mailmobile saves."

"Another benefit suggested by Werkle is faster interdepartmental service on tickets, contract approvals and expense accounts." This is confirmed by Jean Fortune, 37th floor executive secretary supervisor, "It's easier to distribute that kind of material. Instead of putting it in the page's carts' "out" box and have it go all the way back to the mailroom for distribution, I can put it directly into the correct slot myself. Not only does it get there faster, but I don't have to spend as much time making complete labels. I just write down the name of the person and drop it in the Mailmobile. And that's just one of the ways these units are making our people more productive."

Employee acceptance has been high, too. Mailroom pages really like them. "That's right," agrees Maria Hayde, "I think it's great. I still get to see people when I deliver exceptionally urgent pieces, but 80 percent of my

# MASS MUTUAL

Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company



**Massachusetts Mutual** knew they couldn't do anything about the higher cost of external mail, so they turned their attention to cutting costs internally. "The Mailmobile was chosen because our studies proved it could help us do just that," reports Frank Watson, Associate Director of Communications for Mass Mutual.

Prior to the Mailmobile-based system, Massachusetts Mutual depended on manned, electric scooters for internal delivery service. Working with an in-wall pneumatic tube system, the scooters made deliveries and pick-ups approximately every hour.

Now the Mailmobile-based system also works in tandem with the pneumatic tube system, but full delivery cycles are completed every half hour. Two stops are made in the same time one stop was made with the scooters. Incoming mail is received at a tube station where it is placed on the unit for distribution.

Outgoing mail is handled in reverse sequence. Mail to departments on the same floor is simply slipped into that department's tray. And mail to departments on other floors is sent via "Blue Eyes" (Mass Mutual's name for the units) to the tube station where it's sorted and sent directly to that department's floor. There's no need for an interim stop at the main mailroom.

"The increased rate of service provided with Mailmobiles is achieved without added cost, either. When we match all the expenses of the scooter system with all the expenses of the Mailmobile system, we'll save over \$30,000 per year with all of our units in service. And those are real, hard dollars."

"We're very pleased that when we've finally installed all eight of the Mailmobiles planned we'll experience complete payback within three years, but, more important to us is the increased efficiency we're experiencing as the result of better information flow. It's very difficult to affix a dollar value to this benefit. But, we know the gains are substantial."

"The ability to upgrade service to every half hour can't be stressed enough," adds Watson. "This increased service is vital to a company in the insurance business. A large portion of the documents we handle are extremely time-dependent. The time we save with better internal paper movement pays off in better service for our customers and, in turn, in real dollars to the corporation."



"Mailmobile stops at central service centers are also increasing productivity for the company. Employees report they no longer postpone sending work to the centers as they once did. And by using the Mailmobile they eliminate the long walk to the duplicating and word processing areas and the inevitable wait in line that became part of these trips."

#### **Employee acceptance of the Mailmobile has been surprising**

"Whenever a machine is brought in to take over work previously done by people, there's the potential for employee relations problems. But although a large portion of the savings the Mailmobile brings are attributed to displaced salaries, employee acceptance levels are high. All displaced employees have the opportunity to fill openings left by others who have retired, left a department or the company. To date, no Mass Mutual employee is unemployed due to the new system. And the comments we've received indicate people really consider the new unit a 'friend.' I firmly believe we'd have quite a fight on our hands if we tried to take the Mailmobile, rather, 'Blue eyes', away from them."

Safety was naturally a major concern of Mass Mutual when the Mailmobile was considered. But the unit has proven itself accident-proof because of the many safety features built into it. A proximity detection system causes the vehicle to stop automatically should anything lurk in its path. This system is backed up by another automatic stopping system consisting of pressure-sensitive bumpers on the front, sides and along the vertical front edges of the unit. When traveling through sections with enclosed offices, a photo cell placed in the ceiling causes an audible or visual signal when the Mailmobile passes underneath to signal employees of its approach.

"In summary, we couldn't be more pleased with the new Mailmobile-based system. The initial unit has proven to us that when the full eight-unit system is up and running within the year, we will have met and surpassed every goal we've set for it."



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Employee acceptance has been high, too. Mailroom pages really like them. "That's right," agrees Maria Hayde, "I think it's great. I still get to see people when I deliver exceptionally urgent pieces, but 80 percent of my



menial work like pushing the cart is gone. Loading the Mailmobile is really much easier, especially packages which can go on top instead of underneath where they were often forgotten. And sorting has been reduced dramatically, too."

Much of the Mailmobiles' success is due to the reliability of the units. "Downtime is nothing," continues Mr. Werkle, "Our only service calls are for changing the guidepaths. They're actually easier to move than furniture. And we run them for 16 hours a day, every working day, then just plug them in at night and they're fully charged in the morning. How maintenance-free can you get?"

Mr. Werkle's report ends with an interesting anecdote. "Mailmobile's are more than just other office equipment. They still surprise a few visitors. Some are so intrigued they investigate their own needs and end up buying a Mailmobile for themselves. And that's quite a compliment to us as well as a testimonial for the new machines."



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# mailmobile

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AEG-80



BELL & HOWELL







An automatic,  
self-propelled  
delivery vehicle for